

sound political system, a much-admired economy and a genuine desire to maintain peace and prosperity in East Asia and the world.

With membership in the United Nations, Taiwan will become a truly useful international player, contributing its finances and ideas to combat nuclear proliferation, environmental abuses, and the spread of infectious diseases such as AIDS and SARS. As of now, Taiwan has not been invited to any of the various U.N.-sponsored conferences and programs on HIV/AIDS. Moreover, no U.N. bodies are willing to accept Taiwan's aid for Afghanistan and Iraq. This is not in the interests of the Afghan and Iraqi people.

Also, with membership in the United Nations, Taiwan will be able to incorporate itself into the international system of human rights protection, abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. It is heartening to know Taiwan's commitment to human rights is very serious. It is establishing a National Human Rights Commission in accordance with the principles outlined by the United Nations.

Being the world's 17th largest economy, Taiwan will most certainly be able to carry out all United Nations Charter obligations. Taiwan's efforts to help other countries would be much more effective if they could be coordinated with international efforts sponsored by the U.N. and its specialized agencies.

Perhaps one of the best reasons for supporting Taiwan's membership in the United Nations is that Taiwan is willing and anxious to be a full contributing member of the United Nations. So, let's speak up for our friend and ally, the Republic of China on Taiwan. Let's tell the world how unfair it has been to deny the 23 million people of Taiwan their voice and representation in the United Nations and especially their willingness to other nations in need.

HONORING RAFAEL PALMEIRO

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express appreciation to my colleagues for passing H. Res. 315 on September 10, 2003. Most will recall this legislation as recognizing the outstanding feat of Rafael Palmeiro, an alumnus of Mississippi State University (MSU), who hit his 500th homerun as a major leaguer at Arlington Park, Texas, on May 11, 2003.

Also, I want to extend a personal thanks to my good friend Representative PETE SESSIONS for introducing and sponsoring this legislation.

As most of you know, MSU is the flagship university in Mississippi's Third Congressional District. Located in Starkville, it is known throughout the country for its great baseball tradition under legendary Coach Ron Polk, who began his 30th season in 2002 with an 1165-558-1 career record. He is ranked 8th among active NCAA Division I baseball coaches.

It is with pride in the University, pride in Coach Polk, and pride in Rafael, better known to the MSU family as "Raffy" that I present these remarks to identify, and further amplify,

the many achievements of this great athlete during his college career.

In addition to the achievements specified in H. Res. 315, "Raffy's" college career highlights include:

Three-year starter in left field for MSU.

Set MSU & SEC career record for home runs (67), runs batted in (239) and total bases (530).

Led SEC and ranked second nationally with 29 home runs in 1984.

Led SEC and ranked third nationally with 94 RBI in 1984.

In 1984 became the SEC's first Triple Crown winner, leading the league in batting average (.415), home runs (29) and RBI (94).

Named Baseball America's Freshmen of the Year in 1983.

Became SEC's first three-time All American in Baseball.

Helped lead MSU to its highest national finish in baseball (tied for 3rd in 1985).

Named to 1983 SEC All-Tournament Team.

Named to NCAA regional all-tournament teams in 1984 and 1985.

First round draft pick (22nd overall) of the Chicago Cubs (June 1985).

Named All-American in 1983, 1984, and 1985.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that one day in the near future Rafael Palmeiro will be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, New York. He is a super star par excellence that we all can relate to. He has proved himself as a great athlete, a great and caring American, a great role model among Cuban-American, and an inspiration to all those seeking the American Dream. Because of his love for baseball, his MSU family, and his country, it gives me great pleasure to join with the full House in congratulating Rafael Palmeiro for hitting his 500th homerun and his outstanding baseball career.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2003

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to submit, with fifty-one of my colleagues in the House, the College Opportunity for a Better America Act.

Higher education has long served as a critical vehicle to move the country forward and provide the opportunity for a better life to millions. But too many low and middle income students and their families are struggling with soaring college costs, taking on mountains of debt and working long hours that hurt their academics and overall college experience. And still many others cannot afford to attend college at all.

The College Opportunity Act for All will establish innovative programs to allow students to earn their degrees quicker, increases opportunities for Latino families to pursue advanced degrees, and encourages the best graduates to pursue public service careers.

Republican tax policy and education budget cuts have weakened American higher edu-

cation at exactly the time that more people need college training to be competitive in the global marketplace. Instead of meeting that challenge, virtually every state—crippled by federal policies that increased national and state debts—is cutting college funding and raising tuitions at public colleges: a one-two punch that is closing the doors of higher education to millions including disadvantaged and minority students and those who need more education to find new jobs. And the President has frozen the major federal higher education grant program, forcing students to take on more debt or forgo college.

The College Opportunity Act for All goes in a very different direction—it would increase college opportunities for millions of Americans through smart investments and innovations.

The College Opportunity Act for All will: Allow student borrowers burdened with high interest rates to refinance their loans and save money; stop the unfair tax on working students, allowing students who work to save more of their earnings for college costs; double the maximum federal college scholarships (Pell Grant) to \$11,600 by 2011, to help restore its buying power; establish a new competitive grant program to expand graduate-level degree programs at Hispanic Serving Institutions; greatly increase the investment in all Minority Serving Institutions, providing the resources necessary to serve the burgeoning population of minority students; provide public service scholarships to students who pursue careers in teaching, nursing, and other national high priority needs which are having difficulty recruiting and retaining trained personnel; and drastically simplify the student aid application.

While we must address the problem of spiraling tuition this year, however we must not take the wrong-headed approach of Republican proposals that would impose price controls and punish innocent students for tuition raises they have no role in determining. Instead we must address the fiscal policies that result in states' cutting aid to colleges and thus forcing students to pay higher tuitions.

The future of our economy hinges on the ability of young people to afford college. Nearly 2 out of the 3 new jobs that will be created over the next 7 years will require some post-high school training. If we can lower the current 32 percent gap between college participation by low and high income young adults, we could add \$250 billion in gross domestic product and \$85 billion in tax revenue that will help to strengthen the economy.

The Republican tax cuts and budget cuts have devastated states and along with the weak economy pushed higher prices onto college students and their families and now the Republicans propose slashing funding to colleges in retribution for tuition increases. That means even more tuition increases for students, and a weakening of our higher education system. We have to work with the states, who are forcing tuition increases because of education cutbacks, to craft a solution that brings tuition costs down.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this tradition by supporting the College Opportunity for a Better America Act. It is an important step towards making college more affordable and accessible for all Americans.